
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5538

AN ACT CONCERNING JUICE BARS.

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits café permit holders, or their agents or employees, who operate juice bars on the premises from serving alcohol to a customer without a wristband showing the customer is of legal drinking age. By law, a “juice bar” is a place where nonalcoholic beverages are served to minors on the premises of a café permit holder. The law allows a café to operate a juice bar in a room or area where alcohol is not sold, consumed, or dispensed.

The bill imposes a specific penalty for violating the law’s juice bar operation requirements, including separate penalties for subsequent violations. Under the bill, the maximum fines range from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

It also:

1. establishes a 25-day window for a café permittee to notify local law enforcement before a scheduled event about operating a juice bar during the event;
2. specifies that the notice must be sent by certified or electronic mail; and
3. allows the chief local law enforcement officer to designate more than one officer to attend the scheduled event, at the permittee’s expense.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

WRISTBAND REQUIREMENT

Existing law, unchanged by the bill, prohibits the presence of

alcohol and bars its sale or dispensing to, or consumption by, an underage person at a juice bar.

Under the bill, a café permittee or his or her agent or employee operating a juice bar on the premises may serve alcohol during the time the juice bar is in operation only to people who (1) are of legal drinking age and (2) wear a conspicuous wristband issued by the permittee, agent, or employee to the wearer. A wristband is issued to a person to show that his or her age has been verified as at least age 21.

NOTICE OF JUICE BAR EVENT

Current law requires a café permittee to notify the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality where the café is located, in writing, when the café premises will have a juice bar during an upcoming scheduled event. The notice must be made at least 48 hours before the event.

The bill establishes a window, during which notice must occur, of between 30 and five days before the scheduled event. It specifies that the notice must be sent (1) by certified mail or electronic mail to the designated electronic mail address for the chief law enforcement officer and (2) in a way to ensure it is timely received by the officer.

PENALTIES

Under current law, violating the juice bar operation requirements is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000, up to one year imprisonment, or both (CGS § 30-113).

The bill increases the fine amounts, based on whether it is a first or subsequent offense. Under the bill, the maximum fines are:

1. \$2,500 for a first offense,
2. \$5,000 for a second offense, and
3. \$10,000 for a third or subsequent offense.

The bill also retains the maximum one year prison term for any violation.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 38 Nay 0 (03/28/2014)